

Baseline Questionnaire— Community Profile

Chambarak

GENERAL FEATURES OF COMMUNITY

Chambarak is located approximately 117 kilometers east of Yerevan on highway H-30 in Gegharkunik *marz*. It is a short distance to the Azerbaijan border, and the eastern defensive positions of the region are still subject to occasional sniper fire and shelling.



General Executive Summary

Chambarak is a community of 7,703 people with 2,113 households. Mayor Yura Avalyan was elected in 2005 and is serving his first term. The city council has nine members, two of which are women. Six were reelected in 2005. The City Hall administration has 23 staff members. The primary economic base is agriculture, supported by some commercial and light industry. Unemployment is high, and about 150 residents work temporarily outside the city.

For the 2003-2005 budget years, Chambarak's actual revenues and expenditures declined by nearly 42 percent. However, Chambarak has shown a steady increase in land and property tax collection. The land and property tax collection, although increasing, can be further increased if the 40-percent error rate in the tax database is reduced.

Chambarak employs 111 people to deliver public services. Most of these provide cultural and educational services such as kindergarten, art, music, and sports schools and a community center and library. Chambarak is the only city where no fees are charged for kindergarten and other types of specialized education (music, art, sports). Moreover, the city owes substantial back salary to teachers, indicating that the policy of not collecting a fee for kindergarten or special schools is not working.

Water and sewer services are provided by the Armenia Water and Sewerage Company, a national-government-owned enterprise that is managed under contract by SAUR.¹ Solid waste collection, street cleaning, street repair, cemetery maintenance, and animal control are provided by municipal departments. The city also provides housing maintenance for approximately 734 large apartment buildings.

Citizens' access to information in Chambarak is very limited. There is no local TV or radio station, but two newspapers—a *marz*-level paper and a local paper with a very small print run—are available. The city does not have a citizen information center to provide a single point where inquiries can be made. However, public information distribution is enhanced by assigning public relations responsibility to a member of the staff who also maintains the city information board. The city does not publish a newsletter. City staff is not aware of the requirements of Armenia's freedom of

¹ In 2005, AWSC entered into a 5-year contract with SAUR.

information law. About 90 percent of citizen requests, inquiries, and complaints, approximately 70 per month, are processed in a timely manner. The local government has no initiative to provide activities designed to involve youth in the government.

Although local council members have no formal training on the roles and responsibilities of council members, they do have knowledge of city operations. The local council has established rules of procedures. Council does not meet with constituents regularly, nor does it conduct oversight on city services or participate in developing strategic plans for the community. The lack of a meeting place at City Hall has contributed to the difficulty in the council's meeting with local residents. Additionally, the local council does not have legal guidance for passing local legislation.

Table 1-1. Key Contacts

Position	Person	Telephone
Mayor	Yura Avalyan	(0265) 2-22-55; (091) 75-51-00
Deputy Mayor	Azat Torosyan	(0265) 2-33-31
Chief of Staff	Irina Hovhannisyan	(0265) 2-36-36

Table 1-2. General Information

Item	Number	Yes	No
Population 2002 census	7,703		
Number of households	2,113		
Area (est.)	297 hectares		
Certification of boundary		X	
Term of mayor (1st, 2nd, etc.)	1st term		
Number of local council members	9		
Number of local council members reelected	6		

Table 1-3. Gender Mix of Council and City Staff

Office	No. of Males	Percent of Total	No. of Females	Percent of Total
Mayor	1	100	0	0
Local council	7	78	2	22
Staff of City Hall	13	57	10	43
Total	21	64	12	36

Figure 1-1. Organization Chart of Local Government

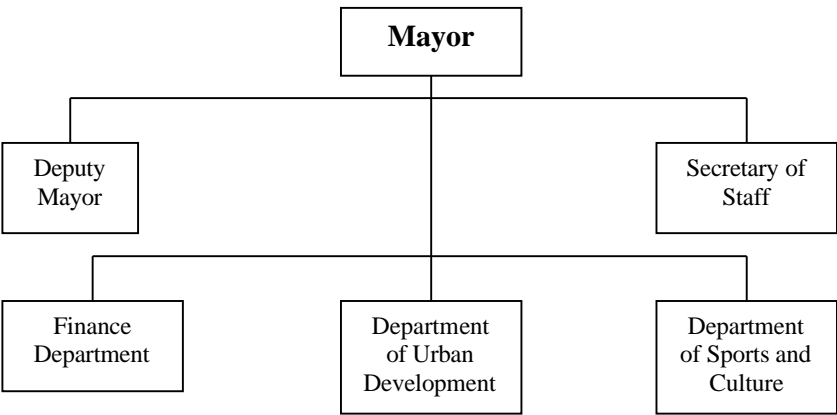


Table 1-4. Economic Base of City

Sector	Estimated Percentage of Local Activity
Agriculture	70
Transportation	5
Tourism	0
Industry (Light and Heavy)	10
Services	5
Small Commercial	10
Other	0
Total	100

The estimated unemployment rate for the city is 70 percent. An estimated 150 residents (2 percent of the total population) work in other countries, primarily Russia.

Figure 1-2. Chambarak Economic Activity by Sector

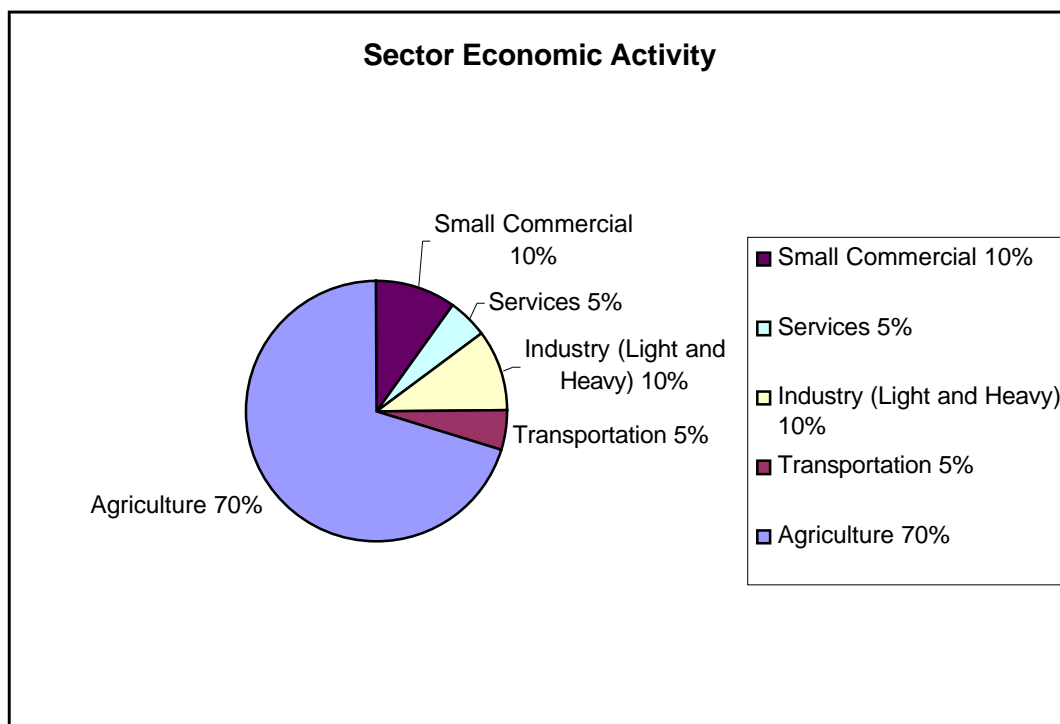


Table 1-5. Computer and Office Equipment of Local Government

Equipment Type	Number	Yes	No
Notebook computers	0		
Desktop computers	4		
Servers	1		
Networked		X	
Copiers	0		
Fax machines	0		
Internet service		X	

Table 1-6. Computer Software in Use

Software Function	Yes	No
Word processing	X	
Microsoft Excel	X	
Specialized budget		X
Oracle (tax collection)	X	

Software Function	Yes	No
Geographic information systems (GIS)		X
Citizen registry		X
Office Works by the Information Systems Development Training Center (ISDTC)		X

Table 1-7. USAID or Other Donor Programs Active in Community

Donor	Type of Program
Save the Children	Infrastructure
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	Shelter for homeless; repair of 70 -100 houses
Catholic Relief Services (C RS)	Infrastructure
Charitas	Educational program for refugees

USAID = United States Agency for International Development

Table 1-8. Active Nongovernmental Organizations or Civil Society Organizations

NGO or CSO	Type of Cooperation or Service with Local Government
Asghatsolk	Urban development
Areguni Social Development	Child development center

CSO = civil society organization ; NGO = nongovernmental organization

Table 1-9. How the City Receives Information about Adopted Legislation

Source	Yes	No
IRTEK (Legal Information Center)		X
LGU associations		X
<i>Marzped</i>	X	
National Assembly		X
Other (newspapers, TV, etc.)	X	

LGU = local government unit

COMPONENT TWO

Local Government Financial Management Systems

Executive Summary

For the 2003-2005 budget years, Chambarak's actual revenues and expenditures declined by nearly 42 percent. However, Chambarak has shown a steady increase in land and property tax collection. The land and property tax collection, although increasing, can be further increased if the 40-percent error rate in the tax database is reduced.

During the annual budget preparation and adoption, there is little citizen participation. The city does not produce a budget in brief to inform citizens about where revenues originate and how expenditures are allocated, although the budget is a public document. Projects in the community development plan are unfunded.

Table 2-1. Revenues and Expenditures, 2003-2005—Planned

Fiscal Year	Revenues (AMD)	Per Capita Revenues* (AMD)	Expenditures (AMD)	Per Capita Expenditures (AMD)
2005	98,654,000	12,807	98,654,000	12,807
2004	89,533,000	11,623	89,533,000	11,623
2003	134,183,400	17,420	134,183,400	17,420

AMD = Armenian drams

Budget numbers include both operating and capital budgets. Budget figures not adjusted for inflation.

* Based on census population figures.

Table 2-2. Revenues and Expenditures, 2003-2005—Actual

Fiscal Year	Revenues (AMD)	Per Capita Revenues* (AMD)	Expenditures (AMD)	Per Capita Expenditures (AMD)
2005	52,834,900	6,859	52,919,500	6,870
2004	49,963,200	6,486	49,963,200	6,486
2003	74,763,300	9,691	74,650,100	9,691

AMD = Armenian drams

Budget numbers include both operating and capital budgets. Budget figures not adjusted for inflation.

* Based on census population figures.

Table 2-3. Property Tax Collections, 2003-2005

Fiscal Year	Property Tax (AMD)	Per Capita* (AMD)
2005	5,541,200	719
2004	3,531,700	458
2003	2,276,300	296

AMD = Armenian drams

Budget numbers include both operating and capital budgets . Budget figures not adjusted for inflation.

* Based on census population figures.

Table 2-4. Property Tax Collection Process

Activity	Amount	Description
Percentage error in property tax data	40%	Both property and land taxes are seriously affected by inaccurate mapping and database problems
Who collects the property tax?		Department of Tax Collection
Tax collection commissions		Not applicable
Tax collection problems		Poverty in the community coupled with the database problems make a high collection rate impossible

Table 2-5. Budget Process

Activity	Amount	Yes	No
Borrowed money from a bank			X
Citizen participation in the formation of the budget			X
Citizen participation in the adoption of the budget			X
Produced a budget in brief			X
Funding for projects in the community development plan			X

Table 2-6. Asset Management

Activity	Amount	Yes	No
Asset management plan developed			X
Local legislation regulating sale or lease of property			X
Public announcement of sale or lease of property		X	
Sale or lease of municipal property	786,000 AMD annual leases	X	
Number of responses received	4		
City has real estate market information for sale or lease of property			X

AMD = Armenian drams

Table 2-7. Anticorruption Effort

Activity	Description
Who do citizens report suspected corruption to?	Mayor
Have there been any reports of possible corruption?	No
Are procurement bids published?	X
Are the advertisements posted in locations and in ways to solicit the maximum number of competitive offers?	No
How many bids are sought?	One
Are bid evaluation committees staffed with professionals to review offers?	None
Are the winning bids announced publicly?	No
What is the most useful criterion used by the city for accepting an offer for goods or services?	Highest price in leasing and selling municipal assets; lowest price in procurement of goods and services
Is an internal control system in place?	No
Who is the internal auditor and who does he report to?	City does not have one
How is the collection of cash handled?	Taxes are recorded in the <i>Marzpetaran</i> Cash Collection Ledger System . A separate cash receipt system is used for all other cash receipts.

COMPONENT THREE

Public Service Delivery

Executive Summary

Chambarak employs 111 people to deliver public services. Most of these are in the cultural and educational services such as kindergarten, art, music, and sports schools and a community center and library. Water and sewer services are provided by the Armenia Water and Sewerage Company, a national-government-owned enterprise that is managed under contract by SAUR.² Solid waste collection and street cleaning are provided by “Chambarak BKT” (OJSC),³ 34 percent of which is owned by the municipality. Street repair is provided by other private enterprises. The cemetery service is provided by City Hall, but animal control is provided by the Union of Hunters, Chambarak Branch. The city also provides housing maintenance for 734 large apartment buildings.

Table 3-1. Basic Services Provided by the City

Mandatory Service	Service Provider	Approximate No. of People Served	Number of Employees	Funding Source
Kindergarten (1)	City budget org.	145	33	100% budget
Art school (1)	City budget org.	75	13	100% budget
Music school (1)	City budget org.	69	12	100% budget
Sport school (1)	City budget org.	150	13	100% budget
Community center	City budget org.	Entire community	6	100% budget
Library	City budget org.	Entire community	18	100% budget
Solid waste collection	Chambarak BKT (OJSC)*	815	10	94% fee; 6% budget
Street cleaning Street repair	Chambarak BKT (OJSC)	Entire community	Same as in waste collection	100% budget
Cemetery	City budget org	Entire community	2	100% budget
Dog control	Union of Hunters, Chambarak Branch	Entire community		100% budget
Apartment building maintenance	Department of Urban Development	2,755	4	100% budget

* OJSC = open joint stock company ; Chambarak BKT (OJSC) is 34% owned by the city

² In 2005, AWSC entered into a 5 -year contract with the French company, SAUR.

³ OJSC = open joint stock company

Table 3-2. Environmental Operations

Service or Activity	Cited or Fined	Not Cited or Fined
Water treatment and supply		X
Wastewater collection		X
Solid waste collection		X

Table 3-3. Collection Rates for Services

Service	2003	2004	2005	Remarks
Apartment building maintenance	0	0	0	There are no condominium associations active in the collection of fees
Solid waste collection	35%	40%	53%	

COMPONENT FOUR

Strengthening Local Government Public Relations

Executive Summary

Citizens' access to information in Chambarak is very limited. There is no local TV or radio station, but there is a local newspaper. The city does not have a citizen information center providing a single point where inquiries can be made. However, public information distribution is enhanced by assigning public relations responsibility to a member of the staff who also maintains the city information board. The city does not publish a newsletter. City staff is not aware of the requirements of Armenia's Freedom of Information Law. However, about 90 percent of citizen requests, inquiries, and complaints, approximately 70 per month, are processed in a timely manner.

Table 4-1. Access to Local Media

Media Type	Yes	No
Television		X
Radio		X
Newspaper	X	

Table 4-2. Local Government Public Relations Responsibility and Capacity

Activity	Amount	Yes	No
Established public relations responsibility		X	
Aware of the freedom of information (FOI) law		X	
Received training on the FOI law			X
Established an information center			X
Track citizen requests for information, service, or complaint		X	
Manual tracking system		X	
Average monthly inquiries, service requests, and complaints	70		
Timely response to FOI requests	90%		
City has an information board		X	
City Hall has a directory		X	
City staff has access to citizens (TV, public meetings, etc.)		X	

Activity	Amount	Yes	No
City produces a newsletter for residents			X
City presents the budget to citizens			X
Youth involvement in local government activities			X
City collaborates with local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)		X	
City Hall office numbers are published or otherwise made available to citizens		X	

FOI = freedom of information; NGO = nongovernmental organization

COMPONENT FIVE

Assistance to Local Councils

Executive Summary

Although local council members have no formal training on the roles and responsibilities of council members, they do have knowledge of city operations. The local council has established rules of procedures. Council does not meet with constituents regularly, nor does it conduct oversight on city services or participate in developing strategic plans for the community. The lack of a meeting place at City Hall has contributed to the difficulty in council's meeting with local residents. Additionally, the local council does not have legal guidance for passing local legislation.

Table 5-1. Local Council Composition and Contact Numbers

Council Member	Gender	Contact Information
1. Tarkhan Khechoyan	M	(0265) 2-27-82
2. Hambarcum Haroutyunyan	M	(0265) 2-20-28
3. Minas Sharyan	M	(0265) 2 32-75
4. Sokrat Mkhitarian	M	(0265) 2 35-72
5. Gayane Khachatryan	F	(0265) 2-27-89
6. Norayr Sevanyan	M	(0265) 2-28-00
7. Yurik La zaryan	M	(0265) 2-23-13
8. Naira Sargsyan	F	(0265) 2-20-76
9. Arcrun Zaqyan	M	(0265) 2-30-33

Table 5-2. Council Training and Selected Practices

Item or Activity	Yes	No
Are established rules of procedure s in place?	X	
Have council members received trai ning on the role and responsibilities of the council?		X
Do newly elected council members receive any training?		X
Do council members receive meeting agendas 3 days prior to public meetings?		X
Are meeting agendas and time and place publicized prior to the meetings?		X
Do citizens actively participate in council meetings?		X

Item or Activity	Yes	No
Are minutes of council meetings open to the public?		X
Does the council participate in the strategic planning for the city?		X
Does the council conduct service oversight hearings ?		X
Have council members participated in publicizing issues?		X
Are council members knowledgeable of city operations?	X	
Does the council receive legal guidance on passing local laws?		X
Do council members meet with constituents regularly?	X	
Is there a place at City Hall where council members can meet with constituents?		X
Has the council used advisory committees, focus groups, or special problem workgroups?		X
Does City Hall have a place for council members to receive mail or other communications?		X